IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of collecting votes from at least some of a group of voters, comprising:

broadcasting an interactive voting application to a plurality of remote broadcast receivers from at least one of a list including a satellite uplink and a cable head-end;

receiving from at least some of the broadcast receivers authentication information associated with one or more voters;

authenticating the voters by comparing the received authentication information with stored authentication information associated with the voter; and

receiving electronic ballots from the broadcast receivers, each electronic ballot comprising a set of votes inputted into the broadcast receiver by a voter using the interactive voting application.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

delivering ballot data to an election board, the ballot data derived from the electronic ballots and whether the voters have voted, wherein the identities of the voters are not associated with the voters' electronic ballots.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein delivering ballot data comprises electronically transmitting the ballot data to a server controlled by the election board.

4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the ballot data includes a plurality of votes, each vote associated with a sequential identification number.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the stored authentication information was received from an election board.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the authentication information for each voter includes:

a unique personal identification number assigned to the voter by the election board; and

a secret information item specified by the voter.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

recording the electronic ballots and that the voters have voted, wherein the identities of the voters are not associated with the electronic ballots.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the authentication information for each voter includes:

a unique personal identification number assigned to the voter by the election board; and

a secret information item specified by the voter.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein authenticating the voters comprises:

determining whether the broadcast receiver from which the voter's authentication information was received is among a set of broadcast receivers pre-approved for use by the voter.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the set of broadcast receivers pre-approved for use by a voter includes a broadcast receiver in a polling place.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the set of broadcast receivers pre-approved for use by a voter includes broadcast receivers located in same geographical area as the voter's residence.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9, further comprising:

for each voter, determining a set of pre-approved broadcast receivers.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein determining a set of pre-approved broadcast receivers for each voter comprises:

determining a geographic location code for the voter according to the voter's residence; and

including in the set of pre-approved broadcast receivers broadcast receivers at polling places assigned to the voter's geographic location code.

14.-15. (Canceled)

16. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

disassociating the identity of each voter from the voter's electronic ballot, so that the voter's votes are not associated with the voter's identity.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

delivering a first and second report to an election board, the first report describing whether a set of voters voted and the second report describing the voters' votes, wherein the voters described in the first report cannot be correlated with their votes described in the second report.

18. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the broadcast receivers is located in a polling place.

19. (Original) A computer-implemented method of collecting votes from a plurality of voters comprising:

transmitting in a broadcast television signal an interactive voting application to a plurality of set-top boxes, the set-top boxes adapted to receive the broadcast television signal, to extract the interactive voting application from the signal, and to execute the voting application and display the voting application on a television operatively coupled thereto;

receiving electronic ballots from the plurality of set-top boxes, the electronic ballots including a set of votes that the voters selected using the interactive voting application; and

storing the votes from the electronic ballots and data relating to which voters submitted electronic ballots, wherein the voters are not correlateable with their votes.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising:

transmitting to an election board data relating to the votes and which voters submitted ballots.

21. (Currently Amended) An interactive method for voting, comprising:

tuning a broadcast receiver, from at least one of a list including a satellite uplink and a cable head-end, to a voting channel, the broadcast receiver receiving a broadcast signal, containing an interactive voting application, on the voting channel;

decoding an interactive voting application contained in the broadcast signal;

executing the interactive voting application to receive votes from a vote;

creating an electronic ballot from the received votes; and

transmitting the electronic ballot to a remote server.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

submitting authentication information to the remote server.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the authentication information includes:

a unique personal identification number; and

a secret information item.

24. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the electronic ballot includes information for authenticating the ballot.

25. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the electronic ballot is encrypted.

26. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein transmitting the electronic ballot comprises transmitting the electronic ballot over a two-way cable connection.

27. (Currently Amended) An electronic voting system comprising:

a broadcaster adapted to transmit broadcast data, the broadcast data including an interactive voting application;

a plurality of broadcast receivers from at least one of a list including a satellite uplink and a cable head-end, each broadcast receiver including a tuner adapted to receive the broadcast data from the broadcaster, a processor adapted to decode and execute the interactive voting application, a memory adapted to store the interactive voting application, a voter data input adapted to receive ballot data from a voter, and a communications interface adapted to transmit the ballot data; and

a response server for receiving ballot data transmitted from the broadcast receivers.

28. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein at least some of the broadcast receivers comprise set-top boxes coupled to a television.

29. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the response server includes:

a ballot database for storing votes from the voting data; and

a voter database for storing whether a voter submitted a ballot, wherein the voters in the voter database are not associated with their votes in the ballot database.

30. (Original) The system of claim 27, further comprising:

an interface to a server operated by an election board, the interface for transmitting to the election board data relating to the votes and which voters voted.

31. (Currently Amended) An electronic voting system comprising:

a broadcaster adapted to transmit broadcast data, the broadcast data including an interactive voting application;

a plurality of broadcast receivers from at least one of a list including a satellite uplink and a cable head-end, each broadcast receiver adapted to execute the interactive voting application to receive votes from a voter to create an electronic ballot, and to transmit the electronic ballot; and

a response server for receiving electronic ballots from the broadcast receivers, wherein the response server includes means for disassociating each electronic ballot from the identity of a voter that created the ballot.

32. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein at least some of the broadcast receivers comprise:

a tuner adapted to receive the broadcast data from the broadcaster;

a processor adapted to decode and execute the interactive voting application;

a memory adapted to store the interactive voting application;

a voter data input adapted to receive ballot data from a voter; and

a communications interface adapted to transmit the ballot data to the response server.

33. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein the response server includes means for authenticating the electronic ballots.

34. (Currently Amended) An ~~interactive voting~~ application ~~for being executed on a broadcast receiver, the application~~ comprising:

an interactive voting application, transmittable via at least one of a list including a satellite uplink and a cable head-end, for being executed on a plurality of remote broadcast receivers, the interactive voting application including,

an input interface for receiving information from a voter;

an output interface for transmitting data to a remote server;

an authentication module adapted to collect authentication information from the voter using the input interface, and further adapted to transmit the authentication information to the remote server using the output interface; and

a ballot module adapted to create an electronic ballot based on vote selections received from the voter, and further adapted to transmit the electronic ballot to the remote server.

35. (Original) The interactive voting application of claim 34, wherein the authentication information includes:

a unique personal identification number assigned to the voter by an election board; and

a secret information item specified by the voter.

36. (Currently Amended) A broadcast signal comprising:

an interactive voting application transmissible via at least one of a list including a satellite uplink and a cable head-end over a broadcast network, the ~~broadcast signal comprising~~ interactive voting application ~~of claim 34.~~ including,

an input interface for receiving information from a voter;

an output interface for transmitting data to a remote server;

an authentication module adapted to collect authentication information from the voter using the input interface, and further adapted to transmit the authentication information to the remote server using the output interface; and

a ballot module adapted to create an electronic ballot based on vote selections received from the voter, and further adapted to transmit the electronic ballot to the remote server.

37. (Original) The broadcast signal of claim 36, wherein the interactive voting application is encoded within a vertical blanking interval of the broadcast signal.

38. (Original) The broadcast signal of claim 36, wherein the interactive voting application is digitally encoded within the broadcast signal.

39. (Original) The broadcast signal of claim 36, further comprising:
a broadcast program.

40. (Original) The broadcast signal of claim 39, wherein the interactive voting application is encoded within a vertical blanking interval of the broadcast signal.

41. (Original) The broadcast signal of claim 39, wherein the interactive voting application is digitally encoded within the broadcast signal.